



Sen. Joyce Mulliken
P.O. Box 40413
109A Irv Newhouse Bldg.
Olympia, WA 98504
(360) 786-7624
Mulliken_jo@leg.wa.gov
1-800-562-6000

Committee Assignments

Land Use & Planning (Chair)
Highways & Transportation
Higher Education
Commerce & Trade

Banks Lake draw down

The following is an excerpt of a letter written by your 13th District legislators to Jim Blanchard from the US Bureau of Reclamation.

"We are writing to express our staunch opposition to the proposed release of 130,000 acre-feet of water from Banks Lake into the Columbia River. To do this late in the summer would dramatically impact the agricultural industries in the Columbia Basin.

Washington State does not have a water problem; it has a water storage problem. By taking water intended for agricultural use, you will inflict irreparable harm to the Ag industry.

On behalf of the individuals, families and businesses that we represent, we ask that you do not move ahead with this Alternative Action draw down plan." – April 11, 2003

Sen. Joyce Mulliken's

UPDATE FROM OLYMPIA

4/18/03

Dear Friends,

I apologize if you're getting tired of hearing about budgets, but I feel it is important to keep you informed and dealing with the different budgets is one of the most important duties I have as your state Senator. I will never assume that anything we do here in Olympia is beyond your understanding.

While we have made cuts and savings here and there in order to fill our operating budget hole, there is another budget – the state capital budget – that we have to negotiate and vote on.

The capital budget is very different than the state's operating budget. The capital budget is the state's "construction" budget. It allocates funds to maintain existing state-owned facilities including public schools, colleges and universities, parks and prisons.

The Senate Republican capital budget is \$2.7 billion. Half of this allocation comes from the issuing of bonds (our state has a bond rating among the top-10 in the nation).

The other half comes from "dedicated funding sources." These include the state's timber fund, which helps pay for school construction; the "water quality account," which is funded by cigarette and alcohol taxes and goes to help fund waste water treatment facilities in the capital budget; and individual college and university accounts that the Legislature has control over for upkeep and expansion of these facilities.

The capital budget will create over 14,000 jobs around the state in construction and various trades. But it's not just a list of expenditures it's an investment. We're investing in jobs, we're investing in our colleges and universities, and we're investing in our quality of life.

When we decide to build a new tech center or skill center at the community college, we expect there to be a payoff down the road in a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. The capital budget has an impact on our economy now and in the future.

Some of the local projects included in the Senate capital budget include:

- \$14 million for a new music education facility at CWU
- \$600,000 for the CWU/Moses Lake Higher Education Center
- \$262,500 for the Iron Horse Trail

As we wind down to the end of the scheduled 105-day session, I want to again thank everyone who has visited and/or contacted my office. It has been a pleasure to hear from you. It truly is an honor and privilege to serve you in Olympia.

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Sen. Joyce Mulliken, 13th Legislative District